



OFFICE OF RESOLUTION MANAGEMENT



ANNUAL REPORT 2004

Our Mission



To provide timely and high quality Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) complaint processing, while fostering discrimination-free work environment through education, training, prevention, and early resolution. We will exemplify fairness, integrity and trustworthiness.

DEAR STAKEHOLDER



The work we do, through our programs and services, has one aim – to support the work being done by VA employees who provide health care, benefits, and final resting places to our nation's veterans. It is important that we understand how our roles in ORM fit into VA's mission of providing high-quality, prompt and seamless service to veterans. In this annual report I share with you our FY 2004 accomplishments, initiatives, and programs in the prevention, early resolution, and processing of equal employment opportunity complaints in VA.

The goal of our counseling, procedural determinations, investigations, and mediation services is to help employees and managers identify and address the causes of complaints so that they can return their full attention to serving our nation's veterans and their families.

ORM has adopted a "Front-End" approach to addressing work place disputes:

- Employ prevention strategies.
- Emphasize early intervention and resolution.
- Encourage Alternative Dispute Resolution.
- Process complaints efficiently – with an emphasis on "Resolution."
- Create Employer-of-Choice environments.

Our services begin when an employee contacts ORM and end when the complaint is resolved. When facilities apply what they learn from root cause analysis, environmental assessments, and training programs, the results are better working environments for employees that lead to improved services to veterans.

It's important to remember that everything we do in ORM is a reflection of our commitment to our motto – **Honoring and serving our Nation's veterans by promoting discrimination-free environments** – and the important role we play in assisting those who provide care and services to America's veterans.


James S. Jones
Deputy Assistant Secretary

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Glossary of Acronyms:

ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
EEOC	Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
FY	Fiscal Year
GC	General Counsel
NCA	National Cemetery Administration
NCOD	National Center for Organizational Development
OEDCA	Office of Employment Discrimination Complaint Adjudication
ORM	Office of Resolution Management
OCAP	Organizational Climate Assessment Program
VA	Department of Veterans Affairs
VACO	VA Central Office
VBA	Veterans Benefits Administration
VHA	Veterans Health Administration

ACCOMPLISHMENTS



On November 21, 1997, Congress enacted Public Law (PL) 105-114, which established the current equal employment opportunity process in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). At that time, the Office of Resolution Management (ORM) became solely responsible for processing complaints of discrimination within the Department.

ORM's mission statement – **to provide timely and high quality equal employment opportunity (EEO) complaint processing, while fostering discrimination free work environments through education, training, prevention, and early resolution** – encapsulates our commitment to provide timely, efficient, and cost-effective complaint processing services.

Our motto – **Honoring and serving our Nation's veterans by promoting discrimination-free environments** – represents our commitment to ensuring the creation of Employer-of-Choice environments so that VA employees can provide the services to veterans and their families that are the cornerstone of VA's mission: **"To care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan..."**

ORM supports the development of Employer-of-Choice environments in VA through EEO discrimination complaint processing and an array of programs. These programs and services support the Enabling Goal of VA's Strategic Plan: **Delivering World-Class Service to Veterans and Their Families by Applying Sound Business Principles that Result in Effective Management of People, Communications, Technology, and Governance.** Employer-of-Choice environments have a positive effect on the bottom-line - improved quality, higher productivity, cost, effectiveness, employee satisfaction, and customer satisfaction.

ORM has made significant progress toward reducing the number of pending complaints, improving the timeliness of complaint processing, and significantly contributed to a variety of agency-wide activities that provide VA employees and managers with resources to prevent or resolve workplace disputes as early as possible.

This report documents ORM's performance during fiscal year (FY) 2004.

Prior to the creation of ORM, the processing time to investigate complaints in VA was over 300 days. We have succeeded in reducing complaint processing times and made significant progress toward reaching our goal of processing investigations in 180 days or less in 2004.

Reduced processing time is critical because it allows the employees involved in complaints to return their full attention to their jobs and provide better service to veterans. The longer a complaint lingers, the greater chance there is that work relationships will deteriorate.

In FY 2004, our primary focus was meeting or exceeding our organizational performance goals by implementing strategies to:

1. Increase the number of VA employees who are aware of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) as an option to address workplace disputes.
2. Increase the number employees who use Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) to resolve workplace disputes.
3. Improve complaint processing timeliness.
4. Reduce the number of investigations more than 180 days old to less than 40 (2% of our total investigations).

We made significant progress toward achieving or exceeding our goals:

- ◆ Trained **91.8 %** of VA employees on mediation awareness, which exceeded the Secretary's goal that **80 %** of VA employees receive this training in FY 2004. ORM is continuing its efforts to increase the use of ADR throughout VA to resolve work place disputes.
- ◆ ORM's resolution rate for complaints where ADR was used is the third best in government, **79.2 %** for FY 2004. This is **49 %** higher than the government-wide average of 48.7 %. VA was the only agency of comparable size (235,345 employees) in the top five in this category. The top two agencies were Defense Dependent Education Activity (17,691 employees) and Defense Logistics Agency (21,435 employees).
- ◆ Completed timely counseling in **97.7 %** of the 4,129 informal complaints processed in FY 2004. This is 21 % better than the government-wide average of 76.3 %for the same period. In addition, ORM's informal resolution rate was on par with the government-wide average of 50 %. Approximately half of the individuals who contacted ORM in FY 2004 did not file a formal complaint.
- ◆ Investigations where completed in an average of **220** days in FY 2004 – a reduction of 5 % from 232 days in FY 2003. This is **20 % less** than the government-wide average of 280 days for the same period. EEOC regulations require completion of investigations within 180 days.
- ◆ Reduced the number of investigations requiring more than 180 days to complete to **21**; a decrease of more than **90 %** compared to 230 cases in FY 2003.

WORKLOAD



VA has a large and diverse workforce numbering approximately 235,345 employees. ORM's workload of incoming informal and formal complaints is a reflection of internal work place situations that lead to employees contacting ORM as a means of addressing situations that are viewed as discriminatory in nature. Complaints received by ORM are processed in accordance with EEOC requirements. Reducing or eliminating complaints requires not only a focus on complaint processing, but on efforts to identify the underlying causes of complaints and in developing strategies to address issues, where possible, before they enter the EEO complaint system. ORM is working with the Administrations and other components of VA to accomplish this goal.

A breakdown of ORM's workload trend data shows the following:

- ◆ Informal complaint activity (Chart A) and formal complaint activity (Chart B) show slight increases in FY 2004 over FY 2003.
- ◆ Average processing time for investigations (Chart C) continue to improve over previous years and are expected to drop below EEOC's mandated time frame of 180 days in FY 2005.
- ◆ Reducing the inventory of investigations pending over 180 days (Chart D) was a high priority in FY 2004, resulting in a significant decrease in the number of investigations in this category.
- ◆ Significant gains were made in reducing the pending inventory of complaints within ORM (Chart E).
- ◆ VA's total inventory of pending complaints for fiscal year 2004 is shown in Chart F. This includes 777 complaints pending in ORM, 300 pending action by OEDCA, and 1,300 pending action by EEOC for a total of 2,377 complaints.
- ◆ Per capita (per 1000) informal and formal complaint activity is shown in Charts G and H. These rates remain consistent with previous years.

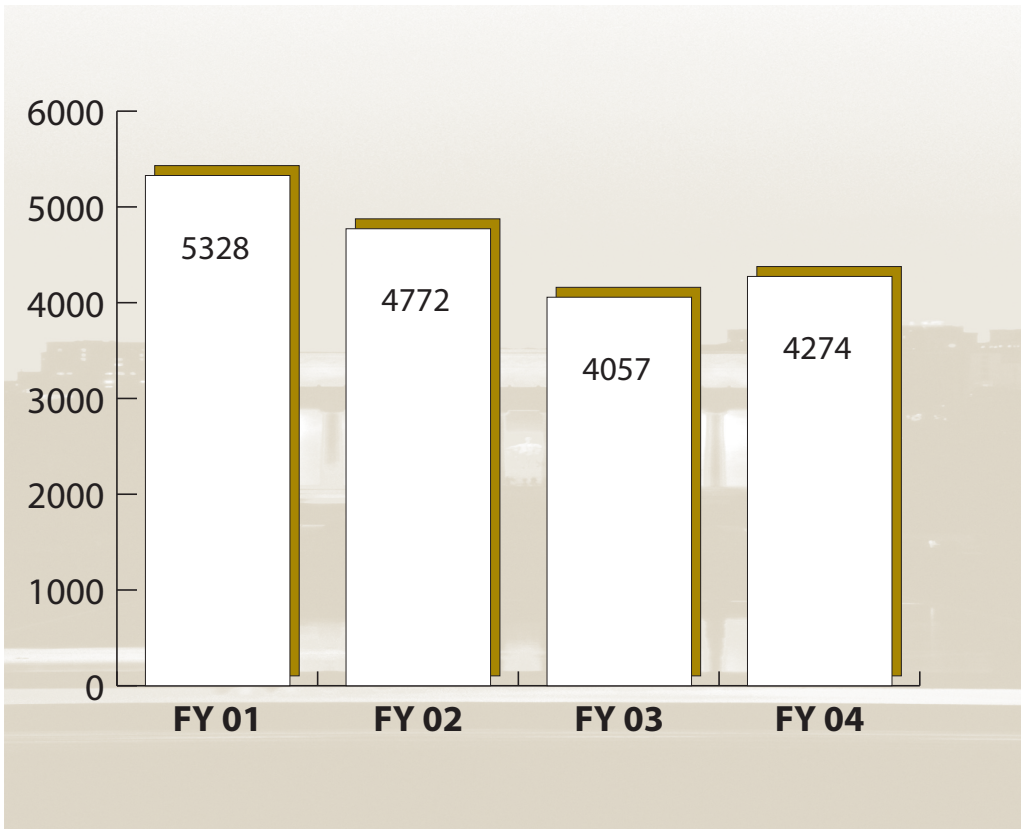


Chart A

Informal Counseling
Activity

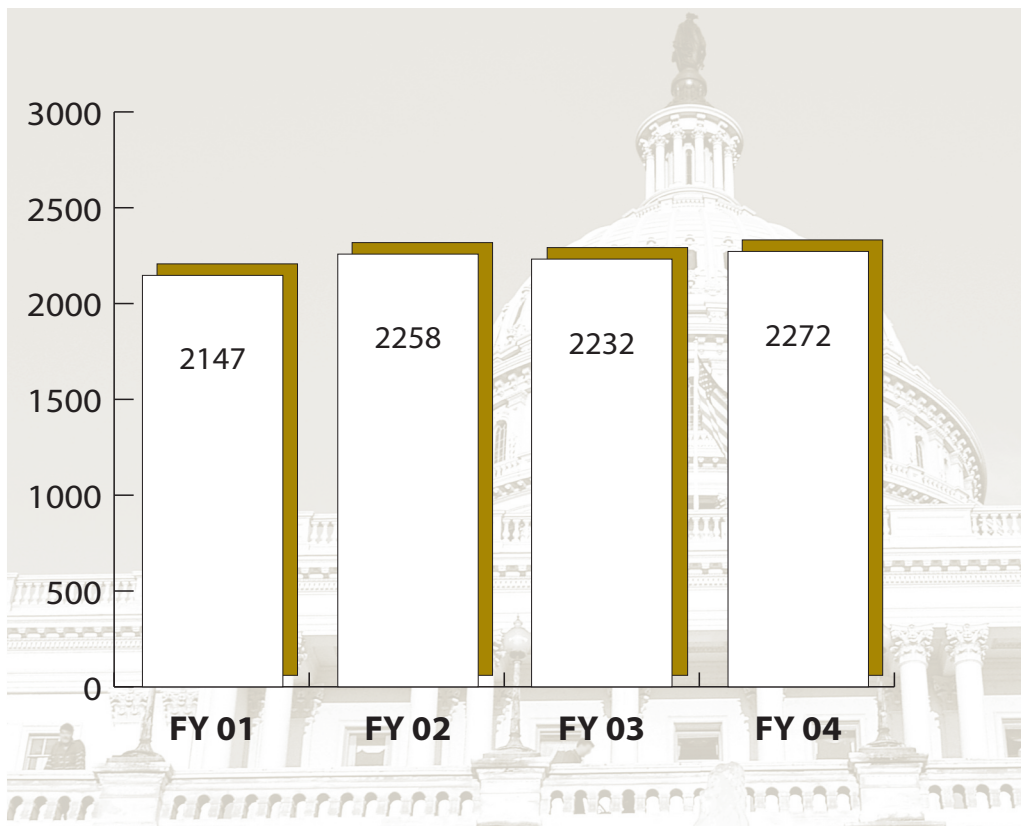


Chart B

Formal Complaint
Activity
Number of
Complaints Filed

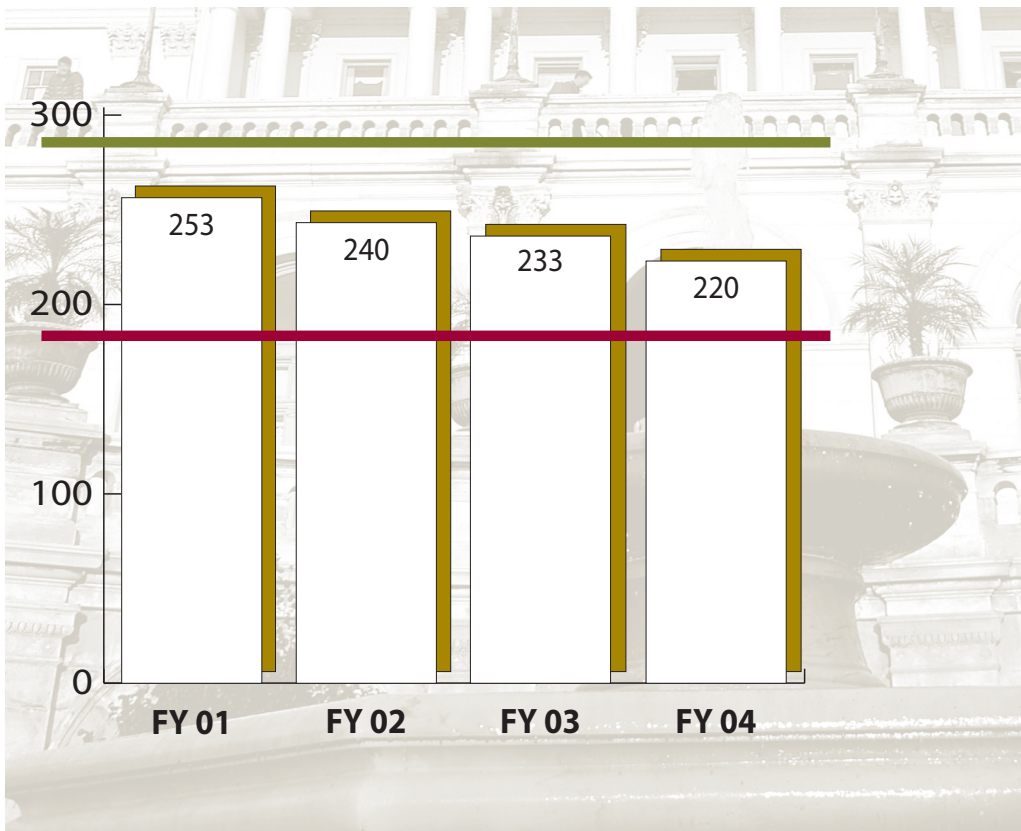


Chart C

Average Processing
Time for
Investigations

■ Government-Wide
Average

■ EEOC Standard
180 Days

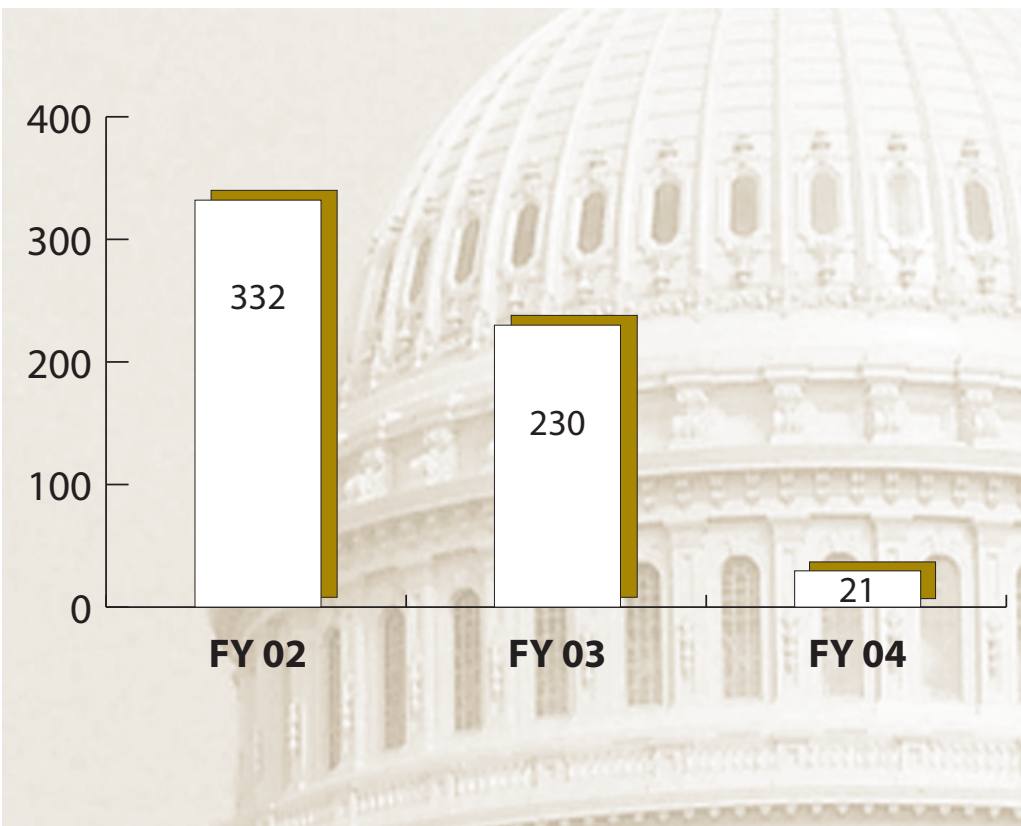


Chart D

Number of
Investigations
Pending Over 180
Days at End of
Fiscal Year

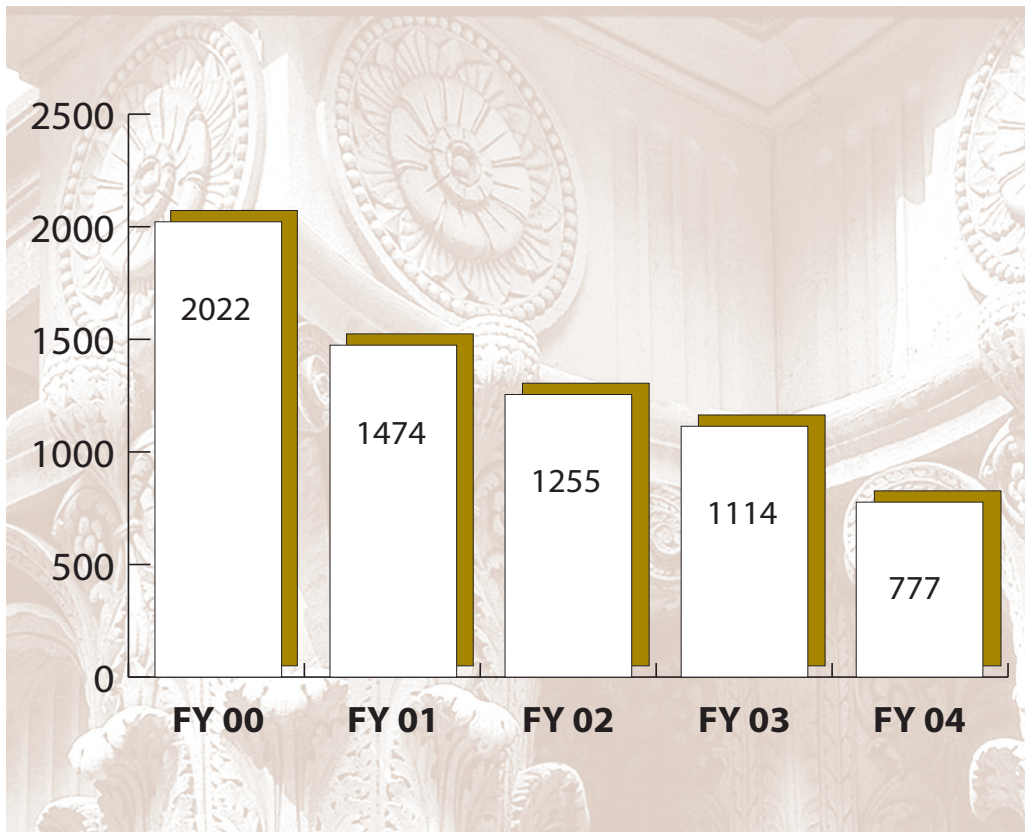


Chart E

Pending Inventory of
Complaints In ORM
(Counseling,
Procedural Reviews,
Investigations)

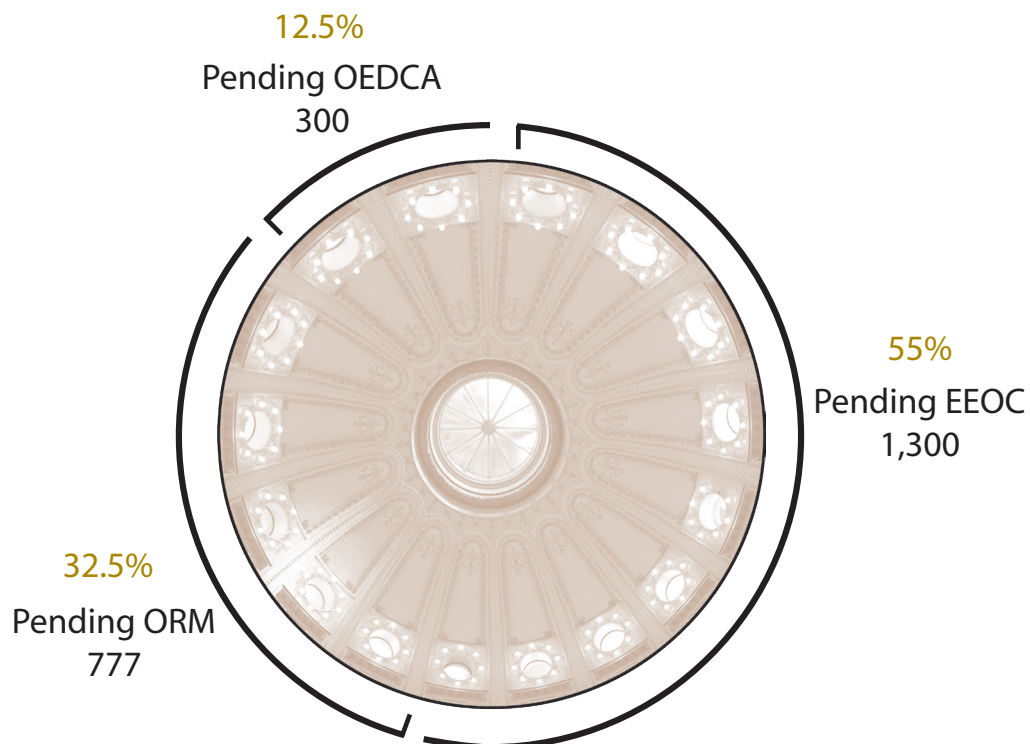


Chart F

FY 04

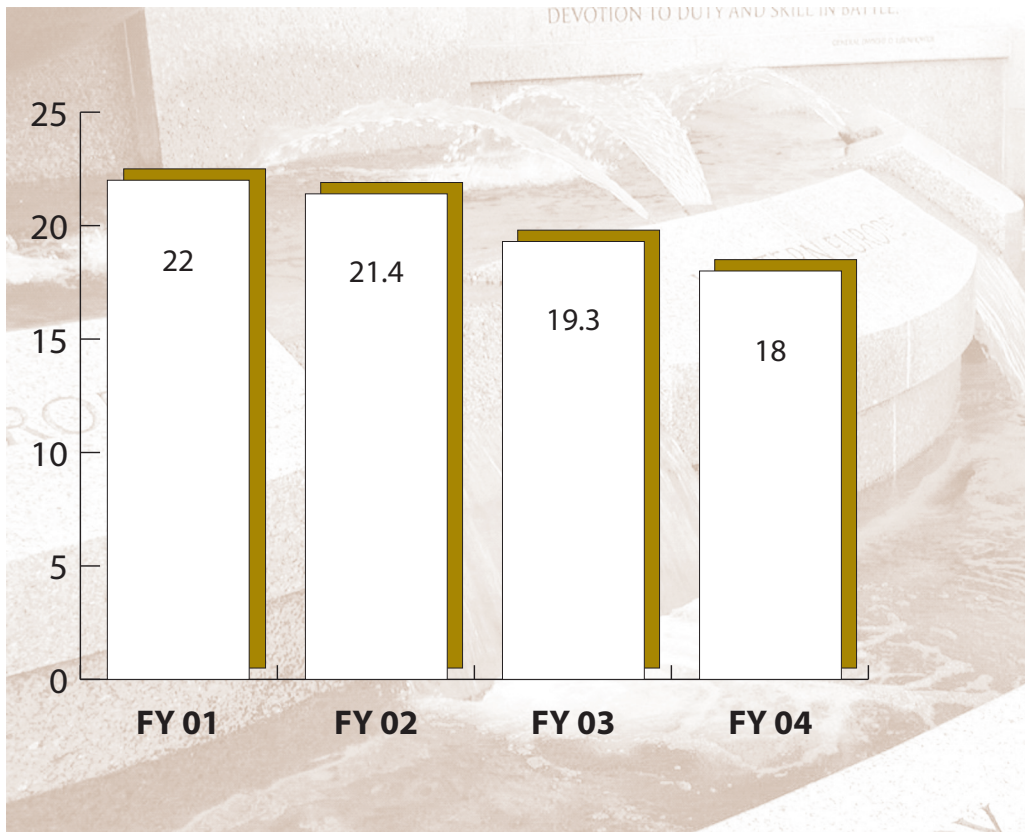


Chart G

Per Capita
(per 1,000 employees)
Informal Complaint
Activity

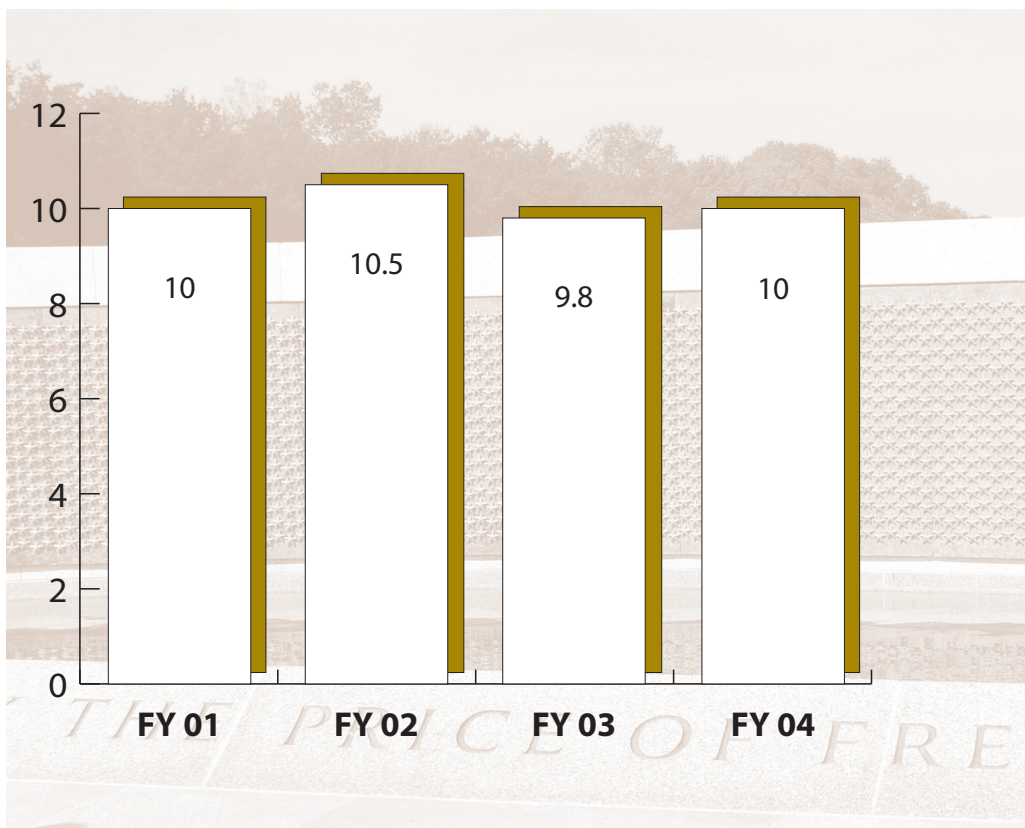


Chart H

Per Capita
(per 1,000 employees)
Formal Complaint
Filing Rates

FY 2004 INITIATIVES TO ENHANCE THE COMPLAINT PROCESS



ELECTRONIC CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Electronic Case Management System (ECMS) will improve access to records, while reducing the costs to produce, compile, and maintain them. The goal is a completely paperless record system. Local facility management will have immediate access to complaint information via ECMS, which will help to quickly identify workplace conflict issues.

CALL MONITORING SYSTEM

ORM is developing a call-monitoring system for our nation-wide toll free telephone number to ensure callers receive high quality service and to help facilitate education and training needs of counselors; that will help them provide the best services dedicated to resolving complaints at the informal stage of the complaint process.

WRITTEN AFFIDAVIT INVESTIGATIONS (WAI)

ORM initiated changes in FY 2004 to improve and expand the manner in which investigations are conducted. The new investigative methodology is called Written Affidavit Investigations (WAI). The goal of using WAI is to reduce the investigative resources and develop better factual records for EEOC and OEDCA to use in determining whether or not discrimination occurred.

This project involved a two-prong plan to reduce the number of pending cases and meet EEOC's requirement of investigating all cases within 180 days.

The implementation of WAI resulted in a significant reduction in our inventory of pending cases, improved investigation timeliness, and productivity.

PROGRAMS



ALTERNATE DISPUTE RESOLUTION (ADR)

MEDIATION IS THE KEY TO LESS COSTLY AND TIME-CONSUMING COMPLAINT PROCESSING

Increasing the use of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) throughout VA was a major initiative for ORM in FY 2004. This involved educating both managers and employees on the benefits of using ADR to resolve work place disputes and offering ADR as part of the complaint process to resolve complaints at the earliest opportunity.

Although VA's 10.6 % ADR participation rate is below the government-wide average of 43 %, the resolution rate is the third best in government, 79.2 %. This is 49 % higher than the government-wide average of 48.7 %. ORM is making a concerted effort to assist the Administrations in increasing ADR participation.

ORM offers ADR – mediation is VA's preferred method of ADR – at each stage of the complaint process (counseling, procedural determinations, and investigations). ORM also offers a trained cadre of mediators who are available to mediate disputes throughout VA. While ORM makes every effort to encourage the use of mediation to resolve complaints, both parties to the dispute must agree to its use. If ADR is not agreed upon by both parties, the complaint continues through the complaint process.

MEDIATION is a voluntary, private and confidential process in which a trained, impartial, and neutral person helps other negotiate a dispute and develop their own mutually acceptable solutions.

Efforts to increase awareness of mediation were undertaken in FY 2004. Meetings were held with each Administration and VACO components resulting in the development of comprehensive ADR programs designed to increase the use of ADR by both management and employees. The most significant agency-wide initiative undertaken in FY 2004 was an ADR Awareness training program that was completed by 91.8 % of VA's employees. ORM will continue this training initiative in FY 2005, as well continuing to work with the Administrations and other VA components to strengthen existing ADR programs. The objective is to increase the awareness of the benefits of ADR and to increase its use to resolve work place disputes.

ADR Awareness Initiative

To encourage the use of mediation throughout the complaint process, ORM developed and distributed an ADR training video, "The Mediation Zone." The video was distributed VA-wide through satellite broadcasts, VHS, DVD, and other modalities. This 31-minute web-cast, featuring video and audio streaming, explains the mediation process and demonstrates its usefulness. It is available at <http://vaww.va.gov/orm/adr/survey.htm>.

ORM Ombudsman Program

In June 2004, the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Resolution Management announced the reintroduction of ORM's Ombudsman Program.

The Ombudsman program is designed to help ORM employees address internal work place issues that affect how they perform their duties and offers an alternative to the traditional grievance and EEO complaint processes. The Ombudsman is a designated impartial dispute resolution practitioner whose major function is to provide confidential and informal assistance to ORM employees. This program is an example of ORM's commitment to improve its work environment and sets an example of what we encourage of others.

ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM (OCAP) *AN ONCE OF PREVENTION IS WORTH A POUND OF CURE*

OCAP is a tool designed to diagnose employee perceptions of the work place and assist management officials in understanding what drives employee satisfaction or dissatisfaction. OCAP provides a structured process to collect and analyze information concerning work place environments. This proactive approach gives important feedback to managers to contain or diffuse potential disputes or EEO complaints. The ability to focus on early resolution of employee concerns about the work environment improves productivity and employee satisfaction. The results of OCAP reviews are documented in an assessment report and distributed to facility managers.

Since 2003, nine facility climate assessments have been completed, with three scheduled for early FY 2005. Surveys were conducted at various medical centers, cemeteries, and a combined regional office and insurance center.

In general these assessments have shown that, across the board, employees take pride in their work and are experienced and knowledgeable about their jobs.

Other common findings include a need for additional supervisor training, that relationships between management and labor range from good to adversarial, and that employees and management, in general support, the use of ADR to resolve work place disputes. The benefit of these assessments is that they provided an individual snapshot of the strengths and weaknesses of the organizations surveyed as well as recommendations for addressing weaknesses.

The OCAP assessment includes:

1. Web-Based Climate Survey

- Collects data on employees' workplace perceptions and perspectives.
- Provides an opportunity for a large number of employees to participate in the assessment of their facility.
- Provide analysis and interpretation through VHA's National Center for Organization Development (NCOD).

2. Focus-Group Sessions

- Ten-to-twelve supervisory and non-supervisory employees per group.
- A trained facilitator conducts each group session separately.
- Pre-established open-ended questions are used, plus face-to-face dialogue among employees.
- Confidential – no names attached to employee comments.

3. On-Site Interviews

- Key Management Officials
- Union Representatives
- EEO Program Managers
- ADR Program Coordinators
- HR Manager (Records Review)

4. Report

- Provides an analysis of data gathered from focus groups, individual interviews, and the web-based survey.
- Identifies facility EEO activity, grievances, and root causes of complaints.
- Provides tools to make changes.
- Provides recommendations of corrections to help improve the work environment.

ORM, in conjunction with the NCOD has also developed several guides to help facilities and others understand how to utilize the OCAP process. These guides are:

- ***The "OCAP Road Map"*** lays out procedures and lines of authority in detail.
- Conducting Professional Focus Groups – ***A Training Manual for the Department of Veterans Affairs*** provides concepts, theories, and techniques for conducting focus groups.
- ***On the Road Map – A Field Guide to OCAP Site Visits: Planning, Implementation, and Reporting***, a shorter version of the focus group manual and provides detailed logistical advice for quick reference in the field.

CUSTOMER SERVICE PROGRAM

The Customer Service Program ensures a comprehensive and consistent measurement and evaluation process for gathering and analyzing customer satisfaction data. This data helps ORM in our quest for continual improvement. During FY 2004, we surveyed more than 3,000 customers.

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Surveys are sent to the following:

- Aggrieved party
- Responding management official
- Witnesses
- Facility EEO liaisons
- Facility HR officials
- Facility Directors
- Top-level management officials

The results of these surveys are tabulated and shared with ORM field offices to identify deficiencies, “best practices,” and improve our services.

To ensure our customers receive quality service, **91 %** of ORM’s employees received customer service training in FY 2004.

QUALITY ASSURANCE PROGRAM

QUALITY CONTROL IS THE ART OF DOING IT RIGHT

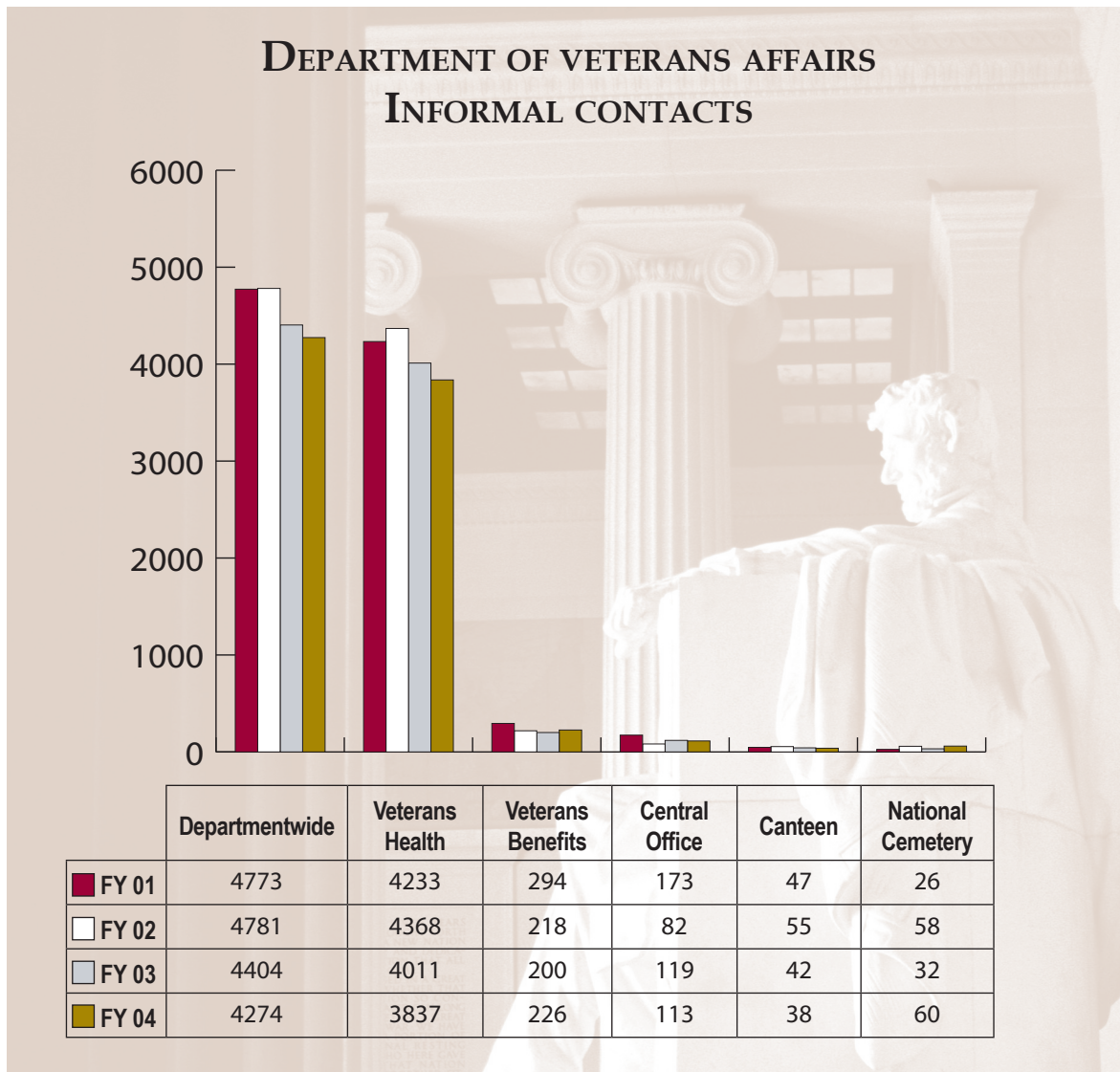
The Quality Assurance (QA) Office assesses how well each ORM field office processes complaints of discrimination in accordance with EEOC regulations and ORM’s Standard Operating Procedures.

During FY 2004, quality monitors were established to assess the quality of ORM complaint processing services. Through these monitors we are able to conduct monthly reviews of complaint processing activity in each field office and give more comprehensive complaint processing information to field managers, ORM management, and VA facilities.

In FY 2005, the QA goal is to conduct a qualitative review of each discipline of the complaint process – Counseling, Intake, and Investigation – to identify areas that need improvement and suggest ways to make those improvements.

Department-Wide Complaint Activity Comparison Data

The QA staff produces comparison charts of EEO activity by FY. Comparisons are charted for both informal and formal complaint activities for VHA, VBA, NCA, VA Central Office, and Canteen Service. These charts reflect a statistical comparison of complaint activity. They are provided to give local managers complaint activity data for their facilities, enabling them to identify and address out-of-line situations. The chart below, which shows VA-wide informal complaint contact information for fiscal years 2001 to 2004, is an example of the types of comparison data provided by ORM.



OFFICE OF POLICY AND COMPLIANCE

SAFEGUARDS, INTEGRITY, AND TRUST

The Office of Policy and Compliance (OPC)

- Develops Departmental EEO discrimination complaint processing policies.
- Monitors Departmental compliance with OEDCA and EEOC decisions.
- Conducts compensatory damage and age discrimination investigations.
- Responds to VA allegations of dissatisfaction with the processing of their EEO complaints (Spin-Off Complaints) by VA employees.
- Responds to Congressional inquiries on behalf of VA employees.
- Prepares Ad Hoc Reports for the major VA operating components.

OPC reports:

- **Senior Managers Report** - Mandated by Public Law 105-114 this Congressional report is disseminated to the House and Senate Committees on Veterans Affairs. The report summarizes employment discrimination complaints filed against senior VA managers, along with the most prevalent issues and bases raised in the complaints.
- **Root Cause Report** – Root cause analysis is an assessment of the underlying causes of work place disputes resulting in EEO complaints. This report is designed to help managers identify to the causes of complaints and address issues that can improve communication, morale, and the workplace environment.

Revised Root Cause Categories

Identification of the root causes of complaints is rapidly becoming one of the more important tools used to help reduce the number of EEO complaints. There are a significant number of instances where work place disputes could have been addressed, and possibly resolved, in a more appropriate forum. To that end, ORM is committed to providing facilities with root cause data specific to their organizations in an effort to help them identify deficiencies and develop interventions designed to address the underlying causes of workplace disputes to reduce complaints and grievances.

During FY 2004, OPC joined the National Center for Organizational Development (NCOD), in a study to determine how the existing root cause categories could be improved to better identify the root causes of complaints. As a result, revisions were made to the root cause categories to make them more user-friendly, easier to read, and simpler to apply. Training on the application of these revised categories was provided to ORM EEO counselors to enable them to better identify and catalog these issues when conducting counseling with employees. As part of this process, OPC developed a better system to disseminate root cause reports to VA facilities and provide a follow-up mechanism to assess the usefulness of the report. Training was also provided to Administration EEO program managers so that they would be familiar with this process.

The revised root cause categories are reflective of management and employee factors:

- **Interpersonal Conflict – Management Factors.**
- **Interpersonal Conflict – Employee Factors.**
- **Aggrieved Does Not Understand Criteria Necessary for Filing an EEO Complaint.**
- **Third Party Apparently Influenced the Decision to File a Complaint.**
- **Other** – This category is used if the complaint does not appear to arise from any of the previously listed root causes.

Understanding and addressing the causes of workplace disputes and grievances are important tools in the creation of “Employer-of-Choice” environments in VA.

The common threads linking each of the root cause categories are awareness, communication, education, and training.

EXTERNAL CIVIL RIGHTS PROGRAM

The External Civil Rights program coordinates the administration of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and its subordinate laws between the Department of Justice and VA. Title VI prohibits discrimination in federally assisted programs based on race, color, age, disability (Sect. 504), sex (Title IX) or national origin.

Department reports prepared by the External Civil Rights Program staff:

- Annual Report on the Age Discrimination Act of 1975.
- Fiscal Year Information and Reporting Requirements for Agencies that Administer Federally Assisted Programs Subject to Executive Order 12250.

LEARNING RESOURCES

PROVIDING CUSTOMER FOCUSED TRAINING

The mission of our Learning Resources Center is to provide customer-focused training – for ORM staff and other employees – that is innovative, accessible, timely, cost-effective, and driven by VA’s organizational goals, objectives, and performance measures.

ORM espouses a two-front approach to training:

- **Internal** – ORM employee development.
- **External** – (VA- Wide) Provide training to develop the skills needed for prevention and early resolution success.

Internal:

- Prepared ORM training policies and procedures and provided guidance to ORM managers on ways to improve employee performance.
- Designed and deployed ORM Learning Resources “Needs Assessment” tools to identify employee training needs.
- Designed and developed students’ and trainers’ manuals for the ORM EEO Counselor Course to standardize the training of EEO counselors.
- Designed and developed presentations, including trainers’ manual, on “Improving Organizational Performance and Leaderships’ Role in Building an Effective and Cohesive Team” to enhance the skills of ORM employees.
- Provided focus group training to ORM and other VA employees in support of OCAP as part of the OCAP assessment program.

External:

- Digitized the “Mediation Zone” and “Three Little Pigs Go to Mediation,” presentations making them accessible online as part of our effort to expand the availability of information on ADR and mediation.
- Conducted an online survey tool to assess VA employees’ awareness of the mediation process to increase ADR awareness. This survey was used in conjunction with the agency-wide ADR Awareness training program that was completed by 91.8 % of VA’s employees.
- Developed and conducted “Mediation Awareness” training for 20 Senior Executive Service (SES) candidates as part of mediation awareness training initiatives.

COMMUNICATING WITH STAKEHOLDERS AND EMPLOYEES

Stakeholders Council

The Stakeholders Council is a forum for ORM to provide information to key VA customers about our programs and services, identify new program areas, and work together on projects of shared interest. The Council also provides input from our stakeholders and acceptance of ORM programs. The Council is made up of representatives from each Administration, Office of General Council, OEDCA, Office of Dispute Resolution, Human Resources, and ORM. The Council meets on a quarterly basis.



ORM Regional Conferences

Each year, ORM hosts EEO conferences in various parts of the country for lead EEO program managers, directors, ADR coordinators, and union officials. The conferences serve as a mechanism for improving communication between ORM and field facilities. ORM's Southeastern and Mid-South Operations, along with VISN's 7, 8, 9, and 16, sponsored a joint EEO Manager's Conference in San Destin, FL, April 5 – 8 2004. The theme of this conference was "One VA – Resolution is the Solution," focused on how to resolve and reduce work place complaints and expand the use of ADR programs. This three-day conference was attended by over 240 participants, including medical center and regional office directors, EEO professionals, ADR coordinators and union officials.

ORM Newsletters

- ORM publishes ***Discrimination Complaint Processing Update***, a quarterly newsletter to VA managers that provides useful information on EEO matters and is targeted towards facility and EEO managers, and ADR coordinators throughout VA.
- **ORM News** is a monthly ORM employee newsletter. Both news letters are available on our Web site.

ORM on the WEB

The ORM Web sites, www.va.gov/orm (Internet) or <http://vaww.va.gov/orm> (Intranet) provide comprehensive information on ORM programs and services.

- EEO Complaint Policies and Procedures
- ORM Field Offices
- ADR/Mediation Program Information and Training Videos
- ORM Fiscal Year Annual Reports
- Publications and Forms
- Links to Related Programs

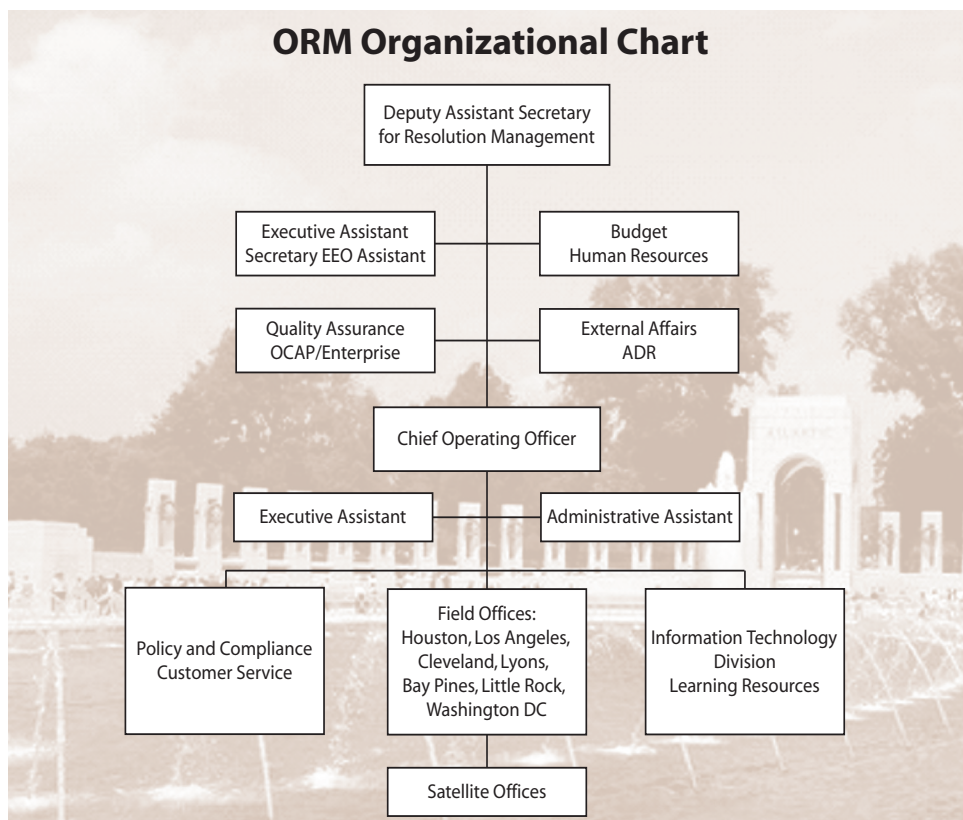
ORGANIZATION



Led by James S. Jones, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Resolution Management, ORM has a cadre of dedicated employees who provide equal employment opportunity discrimination complaint processing services to VA employees, applicants for employment, and former employees. Our complaint processing services – based on fairness, trust, and integrity – include counseling, procedural determinations, investigations, and mediation.

HIGH QUALITY - HIGH PRODUCTIVITY

ORM has responsibility for compliance oversight functions on final agency decisions rendered by OEDCA, appellate EEOC decisions, and matters relating to settlements, including breach of settlements. We accomplish these responsibilities through a nationwide network of seven field operations and program areas that support both ORM and VA.



BUDGET

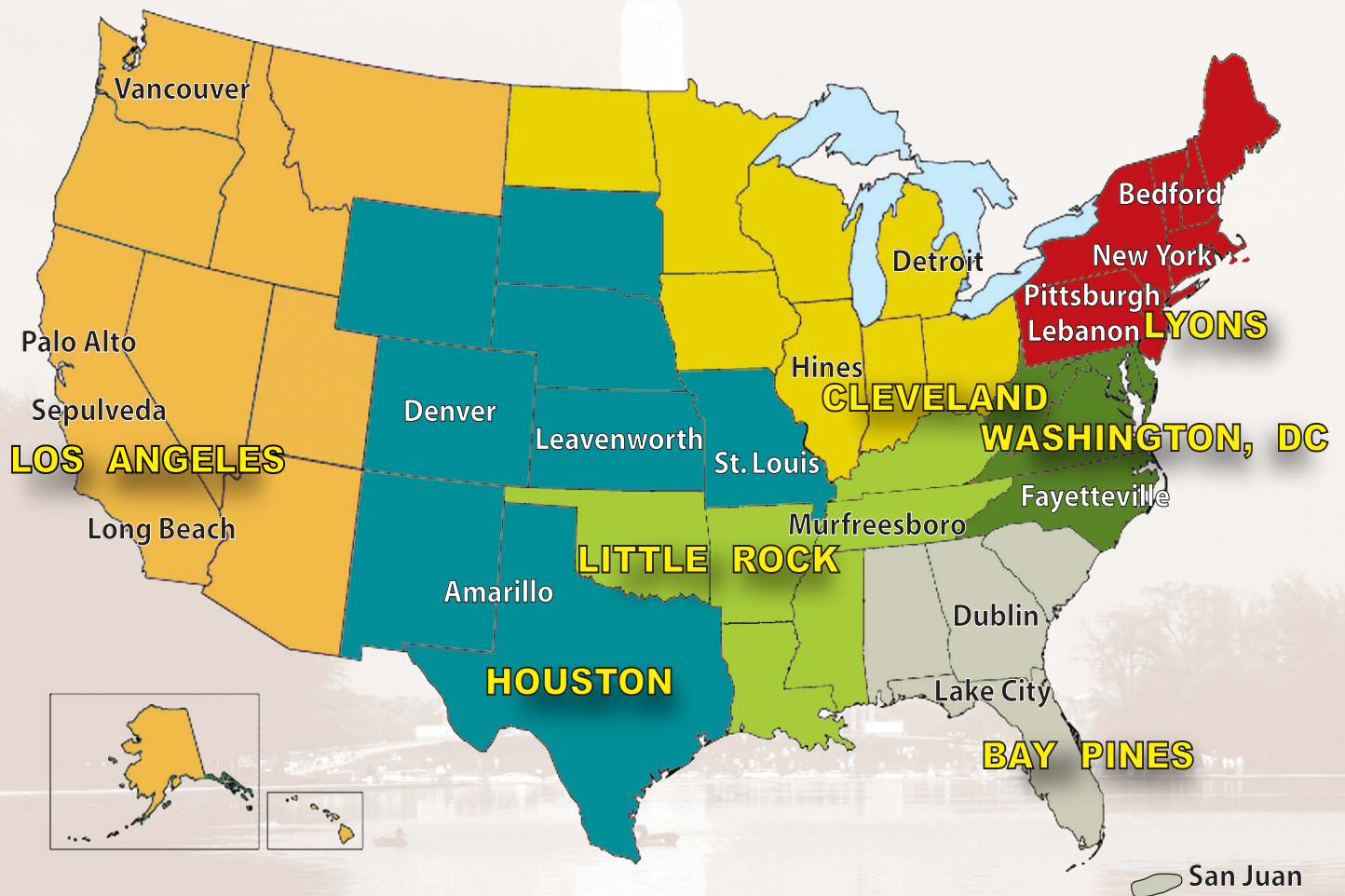
ORM's approved operating budget for FY 2004 was \$27.4 million. The FY 2004 budget remained at the same level as FY 2003. ORM is funded through appropriation and adjustment to expenditure transfers from internal VA organizations – based primarily on the level of complaint activity within each organization – and the administrative overhead associated with managing its Central Office operations and seven field offices.

FIELD OFFICE

Our seven field offices and 17 satellite offices are staffed by full-time, trained EEO professionals. Field Office staff include: Regional EEO Officers, Counselors, Intake Specialists, Investigators, and Administrative Assistants.

Northeastern Operations – Lyons, NJ Satellite Offices: New York, NY; Bedford, MA; Pittsburgh, PA; Lebanon, PA Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Rhode Island.
Mid-Atlantic Operations – Washington, D.C Satellite Office: Fayetteville, NC District of Columbia, Maryland, North Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia
Southeastern Operations – Bay Pines, FL Satellite Office: Lake City, FL Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Puerto Rico, and South Carolina
Great Lakes Operations – Cleveland, OH Satellite Offices: Detroit, MI; Hines, IL Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, Ohio, and Wisconsin
Mid-South Operations – Little Rock, AR Satellite Office: Murfreesboro, AR Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, and Tennessee
Central Plains Operations – Houston, TX Satellite Offices: Amarillo, TX; Leavenworth, KS; Denver, CO; St. Louis, MO Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, South Dakota, Texas and Wyoming
Western Operations – Los Angeles, CA Satellite Offices: Long Beach, CA; Sepulveda, CA; Palo Alto, CA; Vancouver, WA Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah and Washington

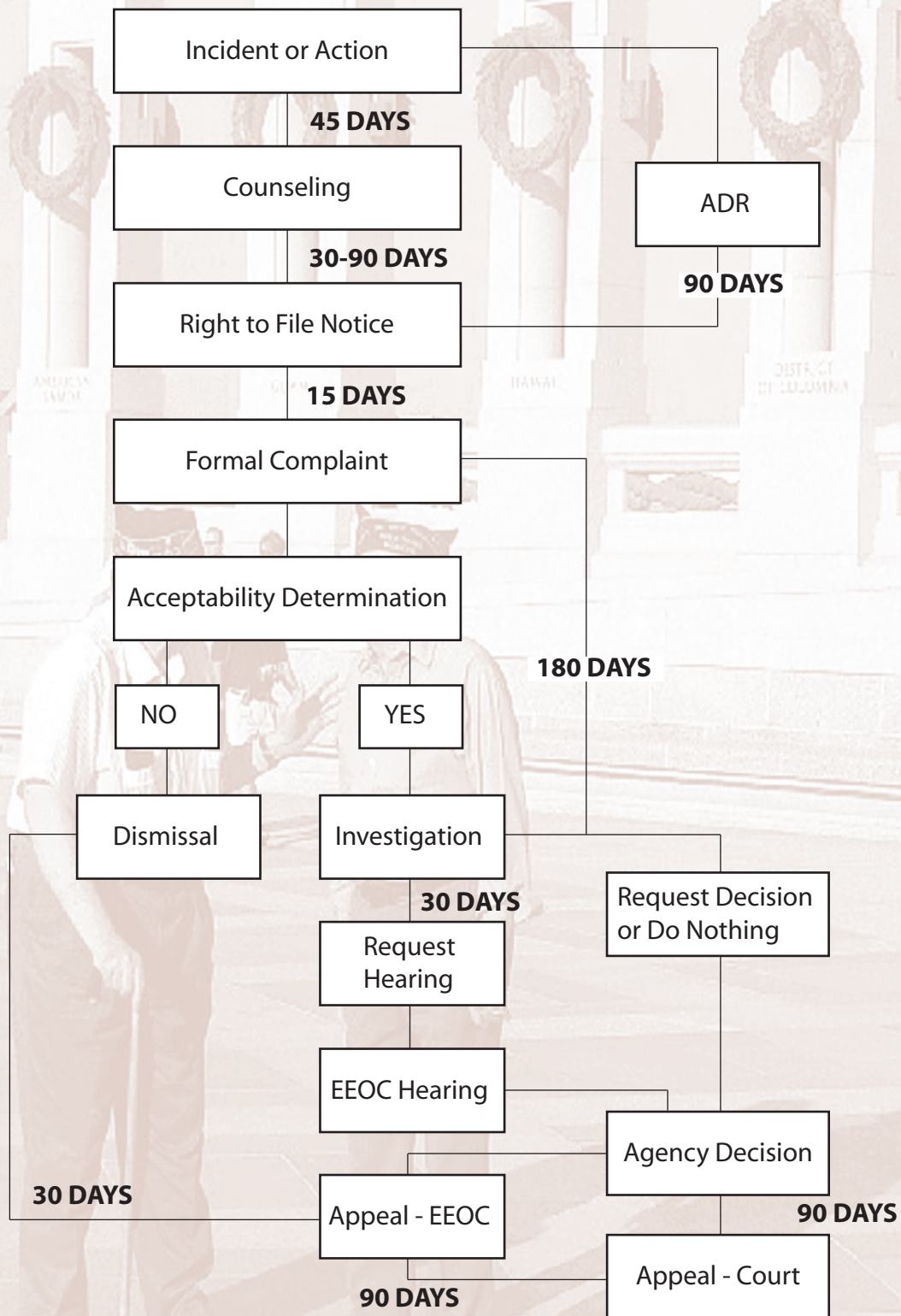
ORM FIELD OFFICES AND GEOGRAPHIC JURISDICTION



Field Offices

- Lyons - Northeastern Operations
- DC - Mid-Atlantic Operations
- Bay Pines - Southeastern Operations
- Cleveland - Great Lakes Operations
- Little Rock - Mid-South Operations
- Houston - Central Plains Operations
- Los Angeles - Western Operations

EEO Discrimination Complaint Process



EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

ORM recognizes its employees in a variety of ways. The following are examples of these efforts:

ORM “SALUTE” Program

ORM began its “SALUTE” program just after September 11, 2001, to honor and recognize ORM employees called to active duty from the military reserve forces. Upon returning to VA, each ORM employee called to active duty is honored with a certificate signed by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, an ORM proclamation, and an eagle plaque. Those who serve more than a year on active military duty receive a U.S. flag flown over the Capitol.

In recognition of this effort, Mr. James S. Jones was one of 12 District of Columbia employers recognized in 2004, for their support of employees serving in the Guard and Reserves. Along with other VA Central Office managers, he received the “Above and Beyond Award” from the District of Columbia Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, during a ceremony at Ft. McNair in Washington, DC.

ORM Employer of Choice Award

In 2004, Northeastern Operations won the first “ORM Employer of Choice Award.” To be chosen for this award, ORM Field Offices must meet or exceed our internal goals and customer expectations. Creating environments where employees can be productive, innovative, and take pride in what they do is the essence of being an Employer-of-Choice. The award is based on:

- Overall employee satisfaction
- Contributions to the mission of the organization
- External customer satisfaction

Northeastern Operations was recognized for its outstanding contributions in the areas of internal and external customer satisfaction. Most noteworthy were the value-added initiatives undertaken by the staff in the areas of team building, conflict management, rewards and recognition programs. These value-added efforts fostered internal cohesiveness, improved morale, increased productivity levels and ultimately resulted in high levels of employee satisfaction.

In addition to the Employer-of-Choice Award, ORM also recognized the contributions of our employees in other ways. These include:

- **Performance Awards** (i.e. Superior Performance, On-the-Spot, Special Contribution).
- **“Customer Service Award”** for exceptional customer service to our internal and external customers.
- **“Investigator of the Month Award”** recognizing investigators who exceeded processing and quality standards for completed investigations.

Office of Resolution Management



Honoring and Serving Our Nation's Veterans by Promoting Discrimination-Free Environments



Department of Veterans Affairs

CONTACTING ORM



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Websites

<http://www.va.gov/orm> (Internet)
<http://vaww.va.gov/orm> (Intranet)

Our Vision



To be the best in the timely and confidential processing of EEO complaints, while remaining sensitive and compassionate to all we serve. To maintain the trust of VA employees and all others touched by our work.

OFFICE OF RESOLUTION MANAGEMENT



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Human Resources and Administration